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ABSTRACT

The report presents an evaluation of the New York City Harmony in Career Learning and Scholastic System (Project HI-CLASS) based on results from the 1988-89 school year. The project provided support services to 420 Spanish- and Chinese-speaking students of limited English proficiency (LEP). It also proposed to instill pride in and respect for American traditions and the ethnic heritage of project students. Project HI-CLASS focused on basic skills, career development, and preoccupational training at Liberty and Lower East Side Prep High Schools in Manhattan and Richmond Hill High School in Queens. This evaluation report presents the following information: (1) general introduction to the program; (2) evaluation methodology; (3) implementation of the project and assessment of its accomplishment of implementation objectives; (4) analysis of the student outcome data; and (5) conclusions and a recommendation based upon the results of the evaluation. The findings of this evaluation include the following outcomes: (1) the project met its objectives for English as a Second Language (ESL), content areas, and student attendance and dropout rates; (2) the program failed to meet objectives in native language arts and staff development; and (3) the program objectives concerning staff awareness of pupil needs and problems, student cultural awareness, and parental involvement could not be assessed due to lack of data. Four tables are included. (JS)

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OREA Report

EVALUATION SECTION REPORT

HARMONY IN CAREER LEARNING AND SCHOLASTIC SYSTEM
PROJECT HI-CLASS
Grant Number T003A80262

1988-89

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April 1990

EVALUATION SECTION REPORT

HARMONY IN CAREER LEARNING AND SCHOLASTIC SYSTEM PROJECT HI-CLASS

Grant Number T003A80262

1988-89

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HARMONY IN CAREER LEARNING AND SCHOLASTIC SYSTEM
PROJECT HI-CLASS
1988-89

SUMMARY

- Project HI-CLASS was fully implemented. During the 1988-89 school year, participating students received instruction in English as a Second Language; Native Language Arts; the bilingual content area subjects of mathematics, science, and social studies; occupational education; and word processing. The project also offered staff and curriculum development and activities for parental involvement.

- Project HI-CLASS met its objectives for English as a Second Language, the content areas, and student attendance and dropout rates. The project failed to meet objectives for Native Language Arts and staff development. OREA could not determine whether the project met its objectives for staff awareness of pupil needs and problems, student cultural awareness, or parental involvement because the project did not provide data.

Harmony in Career Learning and Scholastic System (Project HI-CLASS) completed the first year of a three-year Elementary and Secondary Education Act (E.S.E.A.) Title VII funding cycle. The project provided support services to 420 Spanish- and Chinese-speaking students of limited English proficiency (LEP) who were limited in their ability to read and write in their native language. It also proposed to instill pride in and respect for American traditions and the ethnic heritage of project students. Project HI-CLASS focused on basic skills, career development, and preoccupational training at Liberty and Lower East Side Prep High Schools in Manhattan, and Richmond Hill High School in Queens.

Project HI-CLASS provided supplemental instruction in English as a Second Language (E.S.L.); Native Language Arts (N.L.A.); the bilingual content area subjects of mathematics, science, and social studies; occupational education; and word processing. It also offered staff development, curriculum development, and activities for parental involvement.

The project met its objectives for E.S.L., content areas, and student attendance and dropout rates. It failed to meet objectives in N.L.A. and staff development. OREA could not determine whether Project HI-CLASS met its objectives for staff awareness of pupil needs and problems, student cultural awareness, or parental involvement because of a lack of data.

The project's strong point was in its cultural activities (trips to museums and landmarks around the city), which exposed students to American culture.

The conclusions, based on the findings of this evaluation, lead to the following recommendation:

- Supply appropriate data so that it will be possible for OREA to assess all proposed objectives.

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I. INTRODUCTION

This report documents the Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment's (OREA'S) evaluation of the first year of a three-year Elementary and Secondary Education Act (E.S.E.A.) Title VII-funded program, Harmony in Career Learning and Scholastic System (Project HI-CLASS). This program provided instructional and support services to 420 Spanish- and Chinese-speaking students of limited English proficiency (LEP). Project HI-CLASS attempted to improve these students' English language ability as well as their academic and vocational skills.

HISTORY OF THE PROGRAM

Project HI-CLASS offered basic skills, career development, and preoccupational training to Spanish- and Chinese-speaking LEP students, many of them recent immigrants. None of the three participating sites (Liberty, Lower East Side Prep, and Richmond Hill High Schools) had ever had a Title VII-supported program serving this target population.

SETTING

Liberty High School, on Manhattan's Lower West Side, is a transitional school serving bilingual students and potential dropouts. It offers a two year non-diploma program, after which students transfer to another school for their senior year. The school's population is comprised entirely of speakers of languages other than English (Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, Arabic, Polish, Russian, Korean, Burmese, Haitian Creole, Punjabi, etc.). In 1988-89, Liberty High School had 139 Spanish-

speaking students, 125 of whom were LEP, and 50 Chinese-speaking students, all of whom were LEP.

Lower East Side Prep High School is a school complex on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, a generally low income area. The school had a population of 600, 475 of whom were speakers of Chinese. Four hundred of them were LEP, and Project HI-CLASS served 125.

Richmond Hill High School is located in a section of Queens that has a large Hispanic population. There were 625 Spanish speaking students attending the school in 1988-89, and 120 of them were LEP students served by Project HI-CLASS.

PARTICIPATING STUDENTS

The majority of students participating in Project HI-CLASS were recent immigrants, many from war-torn areas. Some of the students were illiterate in their native language. English language ability ranged from none to basic comprehension and speaking ability but limited ability to read or write. These students also lacked a firm background in mathematics, science, and social studies.

Most of the participants in the program were from low income families, as evidenced by their eligibility for the school's free lunch program. Most of the parents of participating students had very little formal education and worked in traditional immigrant low-paying jobs. Usually, both parents worked. Many students held part time jobs in order to contribute to the family income.

A number of students were from single parent homes or lived with relatives.

Most of the Spanish-speaking students were on grade level in their native language. The Chinese-speaking students were mostly from rural villages where they had received little education. More than 80 percent of the students for whom data were available were over-age for their grade. (See Table 1.)

STAFF

Title VII staff included a project director, three resource teachers, and three paraprofessionals. The project director and the resource teachers held master's degrees; one paraprofessional had a bachelor's degree. The project director, one of the resource teachers, and two of the paraprofessionals were native speakers of Chinese (Cantonese and Mandarin); the other two resource teachers and the paraprofessional were fluent in Spanish. With the exception of two resource teachers, staff members worked full time.

The project director was responsible for the overall supervision of the project and provided counseling and advisement activities for project students as necessary. He had over ten years' experience teaching bilingual and E.S.L. classes and had previously been a teacher at one of the sites.

The resource teachers provided counseling and grade advisement, testing and student placement, tutoring, job placement, and computer-assisted instruction. They also developed curricula and contacted families when necessary.

TABLE 1

Number of Program Students by Age and Grade[a]

Age	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	Total
13	0	1	0	0	1
14	10	0	0	0	10
15	31	4	0	0	35
16	57	9	1	0	67
17	38	3	9	1	51
18	52	3	7	4	66
19	41	4	5	10	60
20	36	4	1	1	42
21	18	8	2	0	28
22	2	0	0	1	2
TOTAL	285	36	25	16	362[b]
			Over-Age Students		
Number	244	22	15	11	292
Percent	85.6	61.1	60.0	68.8	80.7

Note. Framed boxes indicate expected age range for grade.

[a]As of June 1989.

[b]Data were missing for 58 students.

- Most program students were in the ninth grade.
- Eighty percent of program students were over-age for their grade.

The paraprofessionals provided tutoring in most subject areas, helped with the grading of papers and administration of tests, provided in-class translations, and gave computer-assisted instruction.

The Unit Director of Title VII programs supervised the project director. The project director and assistant principals supervised all project staff at the sites. Depending on the site and the specific course, teachers of the project students reported either to the bilingual/E.S.L. department, the foreign language department, or the content area department. Tax levy funds paid the salaries of classroom teachers and additional support personnel who provided instructional services to Project HI-CLASS students. All teachers met the appropriate New York State certification requirements for their respective areas of instruction.

DELIVERY OF SERVICES

Students received instruction in English as a Second Language (E.S.L.); Native Language Arts (N.L.A.) where available; bilingual mathematics, science, and social studies; preoccupational education in business, law, or health; and word processing, where available.

Support services included guidance, counseling and career training, tutoring, parental contact, and E.S.L. and high school equivalency classes for parents and siblings. The project engaged in a wide range of staff development activities and had begun curriculum development activities.

REPORT FORMAT

This report is organized as follows: Chapter II gives the evaluation methodology; Chapter III describes the implementation of the project and assesses its accomplishment of implementation objectives; Chapter IV presents an analysis of the student outcome data; and Chapter V offers conclusions and a recommendation based upon the results of the evaluation.

II. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The evaluation assessed two major areas: program implementation and outcomes. Evaluation questions included the following:

Process/Implementation

- Did the project select students for program participation according to specific criteria?
- Did the project conduct staff development activities?
- Did the project implement instructional activities for developing English language proficiency as proposed?
- Did the project implement instruction for developing native language skills as proposed?
- Did the project implement bilingual instruction in the content areas of mathematics, science, social studies?

Outcome

- What was the average Normal Curve Equivalent (N.C.E.) gain on the Language Assessment Battery (LAB)?
- What percent of Chinese-speaking program students showed a significant increase in Chinese language achievement?
- What percent of program students passed their courses in mathematics, science, social studies?
- How did the attendance rate of program students compare with that of mainstream students?
- How did the dropout rate of program students compare with that of mainstream students?

EVALUATION PROCEDURES

Sample

An OREA field consultant visited two of the three program sites. He observed four classes, interviewed the project director, two resource teachers, and the principal or assistant principal at the sites visited. OREA provided a student data form for each student. The project returned 376 data forms in the fall and 368 in the spring.

Instruments

OREA developed interview and observation schedules for the use of the field consultant and a questionnaire for the project director. Project personnel used OREA-developed data retrieval forms to report student demographic, attendance, and achievement data.

Data Collection

Consultants interviewed and observed school and program staff during a four-month period from February to May 1989. OREA distributed the director's questionnaire and student data forms to the program director in January and April and collected them at the end of February and June.

Data Analysis

OREA used the Language Assessment Battery (LAB) to assess improvement in English proficiency. Project HI-CLASS students were tested at grade level each spring. Students' raw scores were converted to Normal Curve Equivalent (N.C.E.) scores, which

have multiple advantages over other scoring methods. They are standard, normalized, and form an equal interval scale. ("Standard" indicates that the unit of measurement is a fraction of the standard deviation of the original distribution of raw scores; "normalized" refers to the fact that the scale is adjusted for the norm group so that its distribution has the shape of a normal distribution; and "equal interval scales" allow for legitimate aggregation or averaging of scores.) Project students' N.C.E.s indicated their standing in relation to the national average of 50.

To assess the significance of students' achievement in English, OREA computed a correlated t-test on LAB N.C.E. scores. The t-test determined whether the difference between the pre- and posttest scores was significantly greater than would be expected by chance variation alone.

To insure representative achievement data, OREA included only those students who had been in the program for at least five months and had attended classes for at least 100 school days. OREA extrapolated to estimate full-year scores of late-arriving and early-exiting students.

Limitations

Since all LEP students are entitled to receive bilingual and E.S.L. services, OREA was unable to select an equivalent control group. However, the use of two sets of data, as outlined above, served in lieu of a control group.

III. EVALUATION FINDINGS: IMPLEMENTATION

Project HI-CLASS provided 420 LEP students with intensive instruction in E.S.L.; N.L.A.; bilingual or E.S.L. mathematics, science, and social studies; and preoccupational training in business, law, or health careers. Students took mainstream classes in art, music, and physical education. The project's noninstructional component included staff and curriculum development, and activities for parental involvement.

STUDENT PLACEMENT AND PROGRAMMING

The project targeted Chinese and Spanish speaking LEP students who had scored below the twenty-first percentile on the English version of the Language Assessment Battery (LAB).* The project staff chose students for participation after reviewing LAB test scores and student records. The project programmed students for a two-year sequence of bilingual content area and E.S.L. courses. Students deficient in their native language took a sequence of N.L.A. courses. All students were also enrolled in mainstream classes in art, music, and physical education.

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*The Language Assessment Battery (LAB) was developed by the Board of Education of the City of New York to measure the English-language proficiency of non-native speakers of English in order to determine whether they can participate effectively in classes taught in English. Students scoring below the twenty-first percentile on the LAB are entitled to bilingual and E.S.L. services.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The project implemented instructional activities in E.S.L., N.L.A., and content area subjects.

English as a Second Language

Every school offered four levels of E.S.L. courses: elementary, intermediate, advanced, and transitional. This graduated approach fostered students' English language mastery.

Native Language Arts

All schools offered three levels of N.L.A.: elementary, intermediate, and advanced.

At Liberty High School, the OREA field consultant observed a Spanish N.L.A. class. The students were primarily from the Dominican Republic and Central America. Some of the students were ill-prepared in their native languages since they were refugees from politically unstable areas.

The class began with a three-minute writing assignment in which students formed sentences with words from a previous textbook lesson. The teacher called on individuals to read their sentences aloud, then dictated an exercise from the text. Students went to the board to explain the difference between ancient and modern scripts, the subject of the exercise. The teacher proceeded to a pronunciation exercise and assigned as homework five sentences using five words from a section of the text.

At Lower East Side Prep High School, the field consultant observed a Mandarin Chinese N.L.A. class. The class began with a discussion of points of grammar. The teacher asked, "How is the weather today?" and wrote the answer on the board after several students had answered it verbally. After discussing the grammar and parts of speech in the sentence, the teacher asked the class to translate each part into English in order to discuss differences in word order and usage. In a question-and-answer session, he addressed the question of possessives in Chinese. Next, he discussed the differences between positioning adverbs and verbs in the two languages. The teacher ended the class by showing a video of English-speakers studying Japanese and Chinese, joking about how they had trouble learning Chinese, just as the students had when studying English.

Content Area Subjects

All schools offered bilingual content area courses in science, mathematics and social studies. In addition, two of the sites (Lower East Side Prep and Richmond Hill High Schools) offered bilingual courses in word processing and career education.

The OREA consultant observed a global history class in Chinese and English at Liberty High School. The teacher began the class by putting a map of China on the wall. He discussed the Great Wall and the reign of Chin Shih Huang-ti, the first emperor of China, who united the country. A student went to trace the Great Wall on the map. The teacher led a discussion in

a question-and-answer format. The teacher motivated the students to continue the discussion amongst themselves. The teacher switched between Mandarin, Cantonese, and English, stating major themes in all three languages. She led the discussion in English only after she had thoroughly familiarized the students with the content in Chinese. She wrote the main questions on the board in both Chinese and English. Textbooks were in English.

The teacher handed out an assignment with some questions in Chinese and some in English on the subject discussed earlier. She asked the students to break up into their groups and to use their textbooks and confer with each other in order to answer the questions in English. During the ten minutes the students took to answer the questions, the teacher moved from group to group to see whether there were any problems or questions. When the groups were finished, the teacher asked the spokesperson for each group to give their answers. She finished the lesson with a vocabulary exercise. The homework assignment consisted of a crossword puzzle using many of the words from the vocabulary review and a reading assignment.

The consultant observed a bilingual (Cantonese/English) mathematics class at Lower East Side Prep High School. The teacher began with a review of the midterm. The test involved finding medians, means, raw scores, modes, and frequencies. It also had a series of truth tables, a cumulative frequency histogram, and some probability questions. The test was entirely in English. The teacher read the English question first, then

gave the answer and explanations in Cantonese. He summarized main points in English and often called on individual students to elaborate. The teacher then gave the students ten minutes to review their exams and ask questions of each other. At the end of this period, students asked the teacher one or two more questions.

NONINSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The project proposed noninstructional objectives in staff development, awareness of pupil needs and problems, and parental involvement.

Staff Development

The program objective for staff development was:

- Ninety percent of program staff members will enroll in at least one university course each semester.

The project director was the only staff member who took a university course. The project failed to meet its staff development objective.

Awareness of Pupil Needs and Problems

The program objective for awareness of pupil needs and problems was:

- Eighty percent of the staff in the program will demonstrate an increase in awareness of pupils' needs and problems.

Project HI-CLASS did not provide data on this objective, therefore OREA was unable to assess it.

Parental Involvement

The program objective for parental involvement was:

- The proportion of program students' parents who participate in Open School Day/Evening will be equal to or greater than the proportion of mainstream students' parents who participate in this activity.

Two parents' meetings were held in the spring of 1989. The first was on "planning for a better project," the second on "planning for a better year." Fifteen parents attended the first meeting and 12 the second. Two advisory council meetings were held in the fall. However, the project did not provide attendance data for Open School Day/Evening, so OREA could not determine whether Project HI-CLASS met its parental involvement objective.

IV. EVALUATION FINDINGS: OUTCOMES

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The project proposed instructional objectives in E.S.L., N.L.A., and content area subjects.

English as a Second Language

The evaluation objective for English language development was:

- Seventy percent of the target students will demonstrate an appropriate increase in English language proficiency as indicated by mastery of one English syntax objective per twenty days of instruction as demonstrated on the appropriate level of the LAB.

It was impossible to evaluate the E.S.L. objective as stated, since the LAB is not a criterion referenced test. Instead, OREA measured the difference between pre- and posttest LAB scores to determine if students showed an appropriate increase in English language proficiency. Overall, project students showed significant ($p<.05$) gains on the LAB. (See Table 2.) However, it should be noted, that gains were significant only for eleventh graders, and only at Richmond Hill High School. Thus, although it appears that Project HI-CLASS would have met the E.S.L. objective, the significance of this finding seems to be limited.

TABLE 2

Pretest/Posttest N.C.E. Differences on
the Language Assessment Battery, by Grade and Site

Grade	Number of Students	Pretest Mean	Pretest S.D.	Posttest Mean	Posttest S.D.	Difference Mean	Difference S.D.	t value
9	158	4.9	6.7	6.1	8.5	1.2	8.4	1.8
10	49	8.3	9.5	11.0	11.5	2.7	13.0	1.5
11	21	11.3	10.5	18.6	15.0	7.3	11.3	3.0*
12	17	11.1	11.8	14.9	15.7	3.8	9.2	1.7
Site								
Lower East Side	78	7.0	7.0	5.6	5.4	-1.4	6.4	-1.9
Liberty	118	4.5	6.9	5.2	7.4	0.7	6.5	1.1
Richmond Hill	49	11.0	11.5	22.6	14.4	11.6	14.4	5.6*
TOTAL	245	6.6	8.4	8.8	11.1	2.2	9.9	3.5*

*$p<.05$

- Students in the eleventh grade made statistically significant gains on the LAB.
- Students at Richmond Hill High School made statistically significant gains on the LAB.

Native Language Arts

The evaluation objective for native language development was:

- Seventy-five percent of the Chinese dominant participants will demonstrate a significant increase in Chinese language achievement as indicated by a significant improvement at the .05 level of statistical significance when results on a teacher-made instrument are analyzed using a correlated *t*-test.

At Lower East Side Prep High School the project provided N.L.A. data for 42 students. Only 40.5 percent of these students increased their scores from pre- to posttest. At Liberty High School, 55.6 percent of the 91 students for whom pre- and posttest data were reported improved their scores. Project HI-CLASS failed to meet its N.L.A. objective.

Content Area Subjects

The evaluation objective for the content areas was:

- At least 70 percent of all targeted students will score at or above the passing criterion of 65 in the content subject areas of mathematics, science, and social studies.

More than 70 percent of participating students passed their content area courses in mathematics, science, and social studies each semester. (See Table 4.) The passing rate increased from the fall to the spring semester. Project HI-CLASS met the content area objective.

NONINSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The project proposed noninstructional objectives in attendance rate, dropout rate, and student cultural awareness.

TABLE 3

Passing Rates in Content Area Courses

Content Area	Fall		Spring	
	Number of Students	Percent Passing	Number of Students	Percent Passing
Mathematics	272	72.8	163	97.5
Science	18	88.9	115	95.7
Social Studies	281	70.8	294	95.6

- Project HI-CLASS students met the content area objective in all subjects in both semesters.

Attendance Rate

The evaluation objective for attendance was:

- As a result of participating in the program, students' attendance will be significantly higher than that of mainstream students.

The project reported attendance data for 368 students. Their overall attendance rate was 95.6 percent. Mainstream (monolingual) students had an average attendance rate of 85.9 percent. (See Table 5.) Overall and at each site, the attendance rate of program students was significantly higher than that of mainstream students. The project met the attendance objective.

Dropout Rate

The program objective for dropout rate was:

- Program students will have a significantly lower dropout rate than similar nonprogram students.

The project reported no dropouts during the 1988-89 school year. Data on mainstream dropout rates during 1988-90 were not available. Instead, OREA looked at mainstream dropout rates from the 1987-88 school year. That figure was 9.4 percent at Lower East Side High School, 8.7 percent at Richmond Hill High School, and no data were available for Liberty High School. Assuming there was no radical change in the mainstream dropout rate at these schools during the 1988-89 school year, it appears that the project met its dropout objective.

TABLE 4

Attendance Rates of Program
and Mainstream Students, by Site

High School	Number of Program Students	Attendance Rate		z Score
		Program	Mainstream	
Lower East Side	85	93.9	84.7	2.4*
Liberty	170	96.3	87.6	3.4*
Richmond Hill	78	95.8	85.4	2.6*
TOTAL	333	95.3	85.9	4.9*

*$p<.05$

- The attendance rate of program students overall and at each site was significantly higher than the attendance rates of mainstream students.

Student Cultural Awareness

The evaluation objective for increasing student cultural awareness was:

- Seventy-five percent of all target students will demonstrate an improvement in attitude toward one's heritage as indicated by results on an appropriate Language Cultural Heritage Attitude Scale, tabulating growth from pre- to posttesting and ascertaining the percentage of students gaining one scale point or more on a 5-point scale.

Project HI-CLASS did not report data concerning the students' attitudes towards their cultural heritage. Therefore, OREA was unable to evaluate attainment of this objective.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

This was the first year of a three-year funding cycle for Project HI-CLASS. The project targeted LEP students and placed them in the appropriate programs, providing E.S.L., N.L.A., and bilingual content courses.

The project met its objective for E.S.L., since students overall showed significant ($p<.05$) pretest/posttest gains on their LAB scores. However, since these gains were significant in only one grade (eleventh) and at a single site (Richmond Hill High School), there was some doubt about the reliability of this finding.

Less than 75 percent of the Chinese-dominant students for whom there were both pre- and posttest scores showed an increase in Chinese language acquisition, so the project failed to meet its N.L.A. objective.

Over 70 percent of project students passed their mathematics, science, and social studies courses in both the fall and spring semesters; therefore, the project met its content area objective. It also met its attendance objective as the attendance rate of participating students was significantly higher than nonproject students overall and at every site. The project reported no dropouts, meeting the objective that its dropout rate would be lower than that of nonproject students.

Only the project director attended a university course during the 1988-89 school year, therefore the project failed to meet its staff development objective. Because the project did

not supply appropriate data, it was not possible to determine whether it met its objectives in staff awareness of pupil needs and problems, student cultural awareness, or parental involvement.

Project HI-CLASS's strong point was its cultural activities, which showed students the city and various aspects of American culture.

The conclusions, based on the findings of this evaluation, lead to the following recommendation:

- Supply appropriate data so that it will be possible for OREA to assess all proposed objectives.